

Svetlana Book Ends a Debate in U.S.

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Publication of an authorized Russian-language version of Svetlana Alliluyeva's memoirs has put an end to a sharp debate within the United States over whether to go ahead with the October release of her book in this country.

Lewellyn E. Thompson, U.S. Ambassador to Russia, and historian Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. are among those who had urged the U.S. government to apply pressure on the publisher, Harper & Row, to postpone publication until after Nov. 7, the 50th anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution.

Harper & Row briefly considered postponement, it was learned, but both Mrs. Alliluyeva, daughter of the late dictator Joseph Stalin and the vast majority of the U.S. specialists on Soviet affairs argued against postponement on the grounds that nothing would be gained.

Yesterday, Harper & Row reaffirmed that Oct. 16 was still the publication date in this country of both English and Russian language editions, with newspaper and magazine serialization to begin eight days earlier.

The London publishers, Hutchinson's, brought out the Russian language edition yesterday as part of a legal effort to prevent publication of a spurious English-language version of the memoirs apparently planted by Soviet sources.

The Russians have been in an incredible paranoid fit over publication of the memoirs and were reported to have been trying to sell a "doctored" version of the memoirs which contains rather lurid scenes aimed at discrediting Mrs. Alliluyeva's credibility.

The Flegon Press, a small publishing house, had announced plans to publish this unauthorized edition and had been blocked by a court injunction. Publication of the Russian language edition yesterday was to protect Mrs. Alliluyeva's copyright.

With reportedly several million dollars tied up in the rights to the book, Mrs. Alliluyeva's publishers are concerned from a financial as well as literary standpoint in making sure that only the authorized version is published.

The result of the decision to put out the authorized Russian language edition is that there no longer is any way for the Russians to prevent the book from getting out. But perhaps more important, the book should support the claims made all along by the publishers that the book is not a cold war document and is hardly a threat to the Soviet state.

Thompson and Schlesinger, after talks with Soviet officials in Moscow, had voiced fear that if the book was published on schedule it would worsen U.S.-Soviet relations.

They reported that the Russians regarded the book as part of the U.S. government conspiracy to downgrade the 50th anniversary celebration in November and to denigrate the achievements of the Soviet state.

Thompson's advice came in a letter to his predecessors as ambassador, Deputy Undersecretary of State Foy D. Kohler, and in a regular report to the department.

Schlesinger wrote a letter to Leonard Marks, director of the United States Information Agency.

The overwhelming views of the specialists in the U.S. government, however, were opposed to Thompson and Schlesinger. The policy being followed is for the U.S. government to stay out of the debate and leave publication to Mrs. Alliluyeva and her publishers.

The Soviet press has charged that some sort of special high-level committee has been set up within the administration to downgrade the achievement of the Soviet state.

For instance, an article in Komsomolskaya Pravda, the paper of the Young Communist

League, said on July 22 that "an interoffice group attached to the State Department" has been set up to coordinate anti-Soviet actions.

"In addition to Rusk and his assistants (the group) comprises CIA leaders, high officials of the Defense Department and the USIA. The whole movement is headed by the coordination committee for general leadership of psychological warfare, which

is directly subordinated to the U.S. President," the article said.

Of Mrs. Alliluyeva, the article said "quite a hullabaloo is being raised around a sick woman whose face shows evidence of sexual anxiety."

The Soviet version of the memoirs is supposed to contain lurid sexual scenes, emphasizing the propaganda line from Moscow that she is a disturbed woman.